

RIFAMPIN
(Meningococcal prophylaxis)
Fact Sheet

What is rifampin?

Rifampin is an antibiotic that can reduce or eliminate some types of bacteria.

Why take rifampin?

You have been identified as a contact to a person with invasive meningococcal disease. Meningococcal bacteria are spread through close contact (such as living with someone, kissing, sharing cigarettes or water bottles, etc.) Most people will carry these bacteria in their throat and never show any signs of illness. Occasionally, a few people will become very sick with invasive meningococcal disease. Rifampin will reduce or eliminate the meningococcal bacteria from your throat. This reduces your chance of becoming sick or of giving these bacteria to other people.

How do you take rifampin?

Follow the instructions given by your doctor or pharmacist. Be sure that you take rifampin either 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal. Take rifampin with a full glass of water.

Who should not take rifampin?

Rifampin can make other drugs less effective, especially birth control pills. Be sure to tell your doctor of all other medicines that you are currently taking. Your doctor may give you a different antibiotic based on this information.

Also, you should not take rifampin if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Are there side effects to rifampin?

Yes, you may notice an orange color in your urine, tears, or sweat. You shouldn't wear soft contact lenses during treatment, as they may become permanently stained.

Contact your doctor if you develop a fever or rash, notice your skin or eyes turning yellow, or have vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain.